

Kohl, Gorbachev hold talks

MOSCOW (AP) — West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev tried to resume Kremlin meetings that a reunited Germany would not threaten Soviet security. Kohl flew to Moscow earlier in the day for a series of high-level consultations with East and West officials about German reunification. He met for 2½ hours with Gorbachev, Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennady L. Gerasimov told a news conference. The West German foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, also held talks with his Soviet counterpart, Eduard Shevardnadze, Gerasimov said. Shevardnadze told a news conference before the West German officials arrived in the Soviet capital that one of the key issues to be discussed was the need for a German guarantee on stable borders. Both West Germany and East Germany are bound by treaties to respect the current borders of Europe, but a united Germany is not committed to those terms. Conservatives in West Germany have suggested that reunification should be sought within the 1957 borders, which include areas in the Soviet Union as well as large parts of present-day Poland.

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Queen in Aswan

ASWAN, Egypt (Petra) — Her Majesty Queen Noor arrived here Saturday evening to attend meetings of the International Committee for the revival of the Alexandria Library. Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, wife of the Egyptian president, received the Queen. Senator Luis Shafik is accompanying the Queen.

Shihan licensed

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Saturday licensed the Cyprus-based Shihan weekly tabloid to be issued from Amman as a "political and social" magazine. The weekly was established in 1984. In its regular weekly session, the Cabinet also named Rashid Al Rasidhan as secretary general for the Ministry of Public Works and Housing. It also decided to send a delegation to Cairo to represent Jordan at a meeting of the Arab Economic and Social Council.

Ghozali in S. Arabia

NICOSIA (R) — Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmed Ghozali arrived in Saudi Arabia Saturday on a tour that has also taken him to Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said. SPA gave few details but the Oman News Agency said Ghozali was discussing the current fighting in Lebanon and how Arab states could end it.

Egyptian MP produces knife in parliament, resigns

CAIRO (R) — An Egyptian member of parliament produced a knife in the assembly Saturday, offered it President Hosni Mubarak as a weapon to fight corruption, then resigned, parliamentary sources said. They said Ahmad Fouad Shetaya of the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) stood up in parliament and urged Mubarak, who is also chairman of the NDP, to introduce an anti-corruption law.

"Allow me to offer a present to President Mubarak," Shetaya said, taking out a knife hidden in his clothes. "I offer this knife to Mubarak to use it in fighting widespread corruption in Egypt." Shetaya then announced his resignation and left the house, the sources said. He gave no reasons for his action.

UAE president visits Egypt today

ABU DHABI (R) — The president of the United Arab Emirates, (UAE) Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, will start an official visit to Egypt Sunday, the Emirates news agency WAM reported. It did not say how long he would stay.

India sees no need for war

CHANDIGARH, India (R) — India's foreign minister said Saturday he believed in a third war with Pakistan over Kashmir could be averted. "I don't think there's a need for war," External Affairs Minister Indra Kumar told reporters of a three-week-old crisis in relations with neighbouring Pakistan. He was speaking as Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said in Islamabad: "We do not want war and we do not want to create a war psychosis." Bhutto added that opting for peace did not mean abandoning support for the "right of the people of Jammu and Kashmir to self-determination."

Video shop set ablaze in Assuit

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian police have arrested 11 suspects in an arson attack by Muslim militants on a video shop in the central town of Assuit, security sources said Saturday. They quoted Christian shopowner Saifat Halim Habib as saying masked militants brandishing knives stormed the premises on Friday night, splashed petrol on the floor and set it alight. Muslim hardliners, who want Egypt transformed into an Islamic state, regard videos, theatres and cinemas as improper forms of entertainment.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by Jordan Press Foundation

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Children gather around a Palestinian house destroyed by the Israeli army in the occupied Gaza Strip

W. Bank, Gaza sealed off on eve of Communist anniversary

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli troops sealed off major towns in the occupied West Bank Saturday and clamped curfews on parts of the Gaza Strip as Palestinians celebrated the eighth anniversary of the outlawed Palestine Communist Party.

A Palestinian wounded by army fire Friday night died of his wounds, bringing to at least 622 the toll of Palestinians killed by Israeli in the 29-month-old uprising against occupation.

Troops in the occupied Gaza Strip shot and wounded four teenage protesters in various clashes, hospitals reported.

In Gaza City, where Israeli forces fired teargas at Communist supporters marching with the Palestinian flag, stone-throwers injured a para-military border policeman.

Witnesses quoted by Reuters said his colleagues severely clubbed two Palestinian youths. The city's Alhi Hospital said it was treating two badly beaten teens.

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Mandela to be released today

CAPE TOWN (Agencies) — Nelson Mandela, the symbol of unyielding black resistance to apartheid, will go free Sunday after more than 27 years in prison, President F.W. de Klerk announced Saturday.

"Tomorrow will bring us to the end of a long chapter," de Klerk told a news conference. He said he reached his decision after conferring with Mandela Friday night.

The president said he was convinced Mandela was committed to a peaceful resolution of the racial conflict that has plagued South Africa for decades.

The release of the world's best-known political prisoner has long been viewed as a crucial step towards ending South Africa's political stalemate and clearing the way for negotiations on power sharing between whites and the black majority.

Superpowers edge towards START

MOSCOW (Agencies) — The United States and the Soviet Union promised on Saturday to sign an agreement to destroy most of their chemical weapons and announced major progress towards a sweeping accord on strategic nuclear arms.

U.S. officials were jubilant that a three-day visit to Moscow by Secretary of State James Baker had cleared the way for a series of arms control deals to be signed at next June's superpower summit in the United States.

As Baker left the Soviet capital for rapid trips to Bulgaria and Romania, a joint statement said the superpowers would work out a chemical weapons (CW) agreement "including the destruction of the bulk of their CW stocks to equal low levels."

"They will proceed with the objective of completing and signing such an agreement at the June 1990 summit meeting" between U.S. President George Bush and

Saturday an army bullet in the head. Abdul Khader Ibraim, 19, died Friday, shortly after troops shot him in the abdomen, they said.

In Ramallah, where Communists support is high, residents of the town centre — among them a Renter correspondent — were confined to their homes until further notice.

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PLO helps Egypt in probe into bus attack

CAIRO (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is helping Egypt investigate the raid on an Israeli tourist bus, a senior PLO official was quoted as saying Saturday.

"The PLO and the Palestinian embassy in Cairo are cooperating with Egyptian security bodies over the assault," Saeed Kamal, the PLO representative in Cairo, told Egypt's Middle East News Agency (MENA).

His remarks were in apparent response to harsh criticism by Ibrahim Saada, editor of the mass circulation weekly newspaper Akhbar Al Yom, of the PLO's reaction to the attack.

Nine Israelis and two Egyptians were killed and 19 others wounded in the raid near Cairo Sunday.

Saada said PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat should have flown to Cairo as soon as he heard news of the attack "to announce his own and his people's condemnation of this criminal act."

The PLO condemned the assault in a brief item on the Palestinian news agency WAFA.

Kamal condemned the assault as an attempt to scuttle peace efforts and accused unnamed "Israeli quarters" of helping the attackers smuggle their weapons into Egypt.

He cited a report in Saturday's edition of the semi-official newspaper Al Ahram that the grenades used by the assailants were U.S.-made and that Israel was the only country in the Middle East to have them.

According to Al Ahram, the bus attack was plotted inside Israel or the occupied territories.

Al Ahram said the grenades used in the attack were U.S.-made and "this type of grenade is not available in any Middle East country except Israel," said.

The newspaper quoted an unnamed official of the Interior Ministry which is responsible for internal security, for the report.

Published reports have pointed steadily to a Palestinian connection.

(Continued on page 3)

Crown Prince: World should be made aware of illegitimacy of settlements

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Saturday warned against the increasing Soviet Jewish influx to the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza and said that the primary task at this time was to highlight the illegitimacy of settlements in the occupied territories.

In an interview broadcast by British radio, the Crown Prince stressed that any Israeli attempt to settle Soviet Jews in the occupied territories "will allow the forces of conflict and eviction to become the sign of our times."

The Crown Prince said that the main issue of the hour and it is a legal issue of the occupied territories.

which has to be reassessed in all international forums, especially on the level of the United Nations."

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"This will allow (the world) to be convinced that Israel's settlement policy in the occupied territories should be rejected in its essence and is illegal," Prince Hassan said.

The Crown Prince posed a question to the United Nations:

"Twenty years after U.N. Resolution 242 was endorsed what has been done to implement it in practice?"

"This resolution stipulates that occupying lands of others by force is illegal and it also stresses the illegitimacy of settlement in

the occupied territories," he said.

Prince Hassan added that if the issue was to be simplified it could be summarised in that "many of the countries look today to the idea of peaceful solution as the remedy to all hot regional issues, especially confrontational issues in the region."

Prince Hassan called on the major powers of the world to shoulder their responsibility in respecting the various human rights, including the human rights of the Palestinian people.

"We are addressing the international conscience and the superpowers to find human solutions to the issues of human rights in the world but not at the expense of the oldest cause in the world — the cause of Palestinian self-determination," the Crown Prince said.

Jordan will support U.N. move to tackle Soviet influx

AMMAN — Jordan will support a meeting of the United Nations Security Council to discuss the implications of Soviet Jewish immigration to the Israeli-occupied territories, Prime Minister Mudar Badran told reporters Saturday.

The premier was answering a question on Jordan's position towards reports from the U.N. of opposition among members of the Security Council to Soviet Jewish immigration and speculation among Arab diplomats there that the problem could become an issue in the council.

"I wish your house will form an economic and financial committee to calculate the interest we pay over 20 years and it will find that we do not pay any interest at all," Badran told the House.

The premier's statement came in response to Muslim Brotherhood deputies' arguments against approving three development loans from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia carrying a nominal annual interest of 4.5 per cent.

"We are not dealing in silver or gold which do not change prices; we are dealing in banknotes which fluctuate in value according to their foreign exchange rates," Badran said.

He added that loans were the only means to acquiring foreign currency in Jordan adding that he wished there was someone in the world (who) would give us a loan without interest."

He explained that most of the Kingdom's loans were for development project and not commercial borrowing.

"If you want to stop these loans, there will be no more development in this country," he said.

The alternative to accepting loans with interest, according to Badran, will be allowing the lending country to acquire shares in the related project.

"We have shared some of our projects with some countries and they took 20 per cent of the project," Badran said.

The government was then blamed for "letting go" of such a large portion of a successful project, he said.

"All these projects are extremely successful and very profitable and they cover their own loans," the prime minister said.

Muslim Brotherhood Deputy Hamdan Sa'id countered this theory by saying that loans constitute a "national disaster because we pay interest on our loans in

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Municipal, Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Karim Dugmi told the Lower House of Parliament Saturday that Jordan has many chemical waste plants and Minister of Finance Bassem Jardaneh told the House that his ministry pays JD 175,000 annual rent for the building it occupies. Both ministers were asked to stop these loans, there will be no more development in this country," he said.

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"Let us adopt a united Arab nationalist position... not contra-

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Saturday called on the leaders of Jordan, Syria, Iraq and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to unite their efforts in face of Israeli threats.

"We call on the Arab leaders to unite as leaders and work on our unity as people and land in face of our one enemy Israel," Jerash Deputy Hussein Majali said in his proposal to the House to send telegrams to the four leaders.

"Let us adopt a united Arab nationalist position... not contra-

AMMAN — The Lower House voted Saturday in favour of the proposal but the text of the telegram was not written during Saturday's session.

In essence, the proposal is for

the revival of a 33-year-old "Eastern Front" concept. The idea was

initiated in 1956 by Jordan, Syria and Egypt but was never imple-

mented because of the tripartite attack on Egypt by France, Britain and Israel.

The idea was revived after the

1967 war and the Eastern Front was then formed by Jordan, Syria and Iraq with its headquarters in Swida in Syria and was headed

by an Iraqi officer. The Eastern Front fell apart in 1973 because of Arab differences.

The House also adopted a proposal tabled by several deput-

ies to send a message to Saudi Arabia's King Fahd condemning the assassination of two Saudi diplomats in Thailand earlier this month.

The two proposals came at the end of Saturday's regular session during which a number of deput-

ies presented the House with "pressing issues" which they felt

needed immediate attention.

Most of the 21 deputes discus-

sed the recent Ministry of Labour

(Continued on page 3)

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Lebanese flee to safety during lull in fighting

LARNACA, Cyprus (AP) — Nearly 500 refugees fleeing the fighting in Lebanon between rival Christian forces arrived in Larnaca Saturday aboard a ferry, the first to reach Lebanon in a week, and one said: "It was hell."

The blue and white Sunny Boat steamed into Larnaca on the south coast of Cyprus after a nine-hour, 160-kilometre overnight voyage from Jounieh, 17 kilometres north of Beirut.

It sailed for the embattled Christian enclave Friday after a shaky ceasefire was declared between rebel Gen. Michel Aoun's troops and the Lebanese Forces (LF) militia.

Despite the truce, both sides clashed Saturday and one of two British government officials aboard the ferry noted: "It's far from over yet."

Many of the refugees came from Christian districts of east Beirut like Ashrafieh, which have been the scene of fierce battles since the fighting erupted on Jan. 30.

Many had huddled in basements and bomb shelters for days and used the ceasefire to make a run for it to Jounieh.

"It's been terrible with all the fighting that raged around us," said Hala Habash, a middle-aged Christian woman accompanied by two teenage children.

"It was hell," lamented Nawaz Ephraim, 19, who was accompanying his mother and two younger sisters.

"It was very dangerous during the fighting. Gunmen moved from house to house during the street fighting. They took no

notice of the people living in the houses," he said.

"Sometimes they used the presence of non-combatants in the houses as cover," Ephraim noted.

A black-haired young mother with a girl of about three years old in her lap sat crying softly as she waited at the Cypriot immigration desk for her passport to be stamped.

She refused to speak. But a friend said she had been separated from her husband and 10-day-old baby during the fighting.

"We don't know if they're alive or dead," the friend told reporters.

A distraught middle-aged woman with a heavily bandaged foot limped off the ferry and her husband, who declined to be identified, said she had been wounded in the fighting.

"It was very bad in Ashrafieh," said Alfred Heykal, a Christian businessman accompanied by his wife and two frightened little girls clutching dolls tightly.

After sheltering in a basement for days "we decided to take advantage of the ceasefire to drive to Jounieh yesterday," Heykal said.

"But there was no ceasefire. There was shooting all the way and it was very frightening. It's wonderful to be here, safe," he said.

They were told the boat belonged to the Lebanese Forces and was heading for Beirut with supplies for units isolated there since the capture of Dbayeh, Ephraim said.

The two British officials declined to give their names, but said they had been on an official visit to the British embassy in Beirut.

The Lebanese have done some futile things before, but this must be the most futile ever," one said of the savage intercommunal bloodletting in which more than 400 people have been killed.

"The damage in Dbayeh is quite extraordinary," he added, referring to the coastal town north of Beirut that Aoun's forces wrested from the Lebanese Forces in hand-to-hand fighting a week ago.

Jounieh itself, held by the Lebanese Forces, appeared to have escaped heavy damage, apart from the military barracks and nearby buildings in the port area, the British official added.

He said that he and his companion had to drive to Jounieh from Beirut by a circuitous route over the mountains because the main coastal highway has been cut by the fighting.

"There are rival checkpoints everywhere," he added.

Efstathios Efstratiou, a Cypriot officer aboard the Larnaca-based Sunny Boat, said the ferry had not come under fire when it slipped into Jounieh.

"But just before we sailed from Jounieh we saw a small boat that had just left the port being sheltered as it sped toward Beirut," he said.

The 73 senators said they want to see the United States "reinforce the democratic trends in the nations of Eastern Europe."

"Budgetary realities force us to make difficult choices, but retrenching on our commitment to assistance to Israel and Egypt would not be a wise choice," they wrote.

Soviet flights to Israel

Meanwhile more than 60 senators, including majority leader George Mitchell and Dole, have urged Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to implement a Dec. 6, 1989 agreement between the Israeli and Soviet airlines to transport Soviet Jews to Israel.

In a letter dated Feb. 5, the senators explained that the agreement "to advance air transport and aerial services" between Soviet and Israeli points directly" was scheduled for implementation on Jan. 1, but that "as of this day, no actions related to the agreement have been taken."

The senators said they have been assured that "all aspects of authorisation for the Soviet Jewish emigres to leave for Israel already have been arranged," including exit visas, money for transit and airline tickets. In spite of that, the Israeli mission that conducted the negotiation has been informed that "approval for implementation must come from the political level" of the Soviet Union.

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Head-on collision over counting hands

By a Jordan Times Reporter

AMMAN — A vote in the Lower House of Parliament Saturday to postpone discussions on the formation of a temporary House committee on defence, security and armed forces sparked controversy over the vote-counting procedure in the House and cast doubt over the credibility of the process.

Speaker Saleh Arar announced that 44 deputies voted in favour of a proposal to postpone the discussions for four years, but several deputies and observers later said only 33 or 34 deputies had endorsed the motion.

The vote on the postpone- ment motion, tabled by Deputy Abdulla Ensour, followed a prolonged debate over the committee's exact functions.

Prime Minister Muamer Badran took part in the discussion, and expressed his opposition to what he described as the

vote.

Amman Deputy Fakhri Kawar said Alawi first

defined the committee's functions.

Deputy Bassam Haddad suggested that 44

deputies endorsed Ensour's

proposal.

Arar told Murad he was de- viating from the subject of

discussion and ruled that the

Amman deputy's statement be

deleted from the House's re- cords.

Later, during the afternoon

session, the House witnessed a

repetition of the vote-counting

discrepancy over a Finance

Committee recommendation

to the House that loans to the

Kingdom that come in the

form of provisional laws pre-

sented by the government be

rejected.

According to the first vote

count by Khair, 31 deputies

endorsed the motion out of 69

deputies who attended the

session. Finance Committee rap-

orteur Abdulla Akayleh

strongly protested as "impossi-

ble" the results of the count

and several deputies shouted

that they had counted 41. Arar

repeated the count and this

time Khair announced 37 in

favour out of 68 deputies pre-

sented and the proposal was en-

dorsed.

In remarks made to the Jordan

Times later, deputies contended

that during Saturday's

session and before was not

accurate, and criticised the

method used to count votes.

Some of them proposed that

more developed vote-counting

methods such as electronic

boards used in other parlia-

ments be adopted by the

House.

National music committee formed

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Culture Khaled Al Karaki yesterday formed the Jordan National Music Committee comprising representatives from the ministries of culture, education, and information as well as the Jordanian Armed Forces, the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, Yarmouk University, the Jordan Musicians Association, and the Music Academy.

Workshop calls for agriculture insurance

AMMAN (J.T.) — A two-day workshop held here last week has called for applying agricultural insurance in Jordan and for the enactment of special legislation to facilitate the process.

A statement on the recommendations of the workshop, issued Saturday, emphasised that agricultural insurance was an effective and important tool in agricultural development helping to stabilise farmers' incomes, protecting and increasing investments and introducing modern technology to increase output.

The statement said that the private sector in Jordan should shoulder the task of providing agricultural insurance and urged insurance companies in the Kingdom to set up a consortium for this type of service and to re-insure their operations with international insurance companies.

The statement said that local insurance companies could work out a special system for this operation in cooperation with the concerned government institutions.

The statement suggested that the insurance scheme be divided into three main categories — livestock production, agricultural

and production in irrigated areas, and population in rain-fed regions — and that agricultural insurance services be applied in degrees and with pilot projects for dairy products and poultry and in the field of producing vegetable crops and wheat.

The statement said such insurance could be expanded in the future to cover livestock, cereals, and fruit in both the irrigated and rain-fed areas.

It said that credit institutions and cooperative societies could serve as a liaison between small farmers and the insurance companies.

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livestock production, agricultural

Deputies stress need for hospital in Irbid

AMMAN (J.T.) — Three members of the Lower House of Parliament have requested that a new hospital be built with the complex of the Jordan University for Science and Technology (JUST) in Irbid Governorate to meet the growing need for hospital services.

Deputies Ahmad Kofahi, Abdulla Rahim Eikour and Kamel Al Omari said in a memorandum to Lower House Speaker Saleh Arar that the population in the governorate accounts for 28 per cent of the total population of Jordan; and yet they have only 17 per cent of the total number of hospital beds in the Kingdom.

At present, there are 18 hospital beds for every 10,000 people in the Kingdom, compared with 149 in Sweden, 118 in West Germany, and 39 in Kuwait, the memorandum said. It said that an increase in hospital beds was essential, particularly in Irbid Governorate where the population in the governorate accounts for 28 per cent of the total population of Jordan; and yet they have only 17 per cent of the total number of hospital beds in the Kingdom.

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Adjusting to the changing world

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Minimum wage hurts labour

NEWS suggest that the Ministry of Labour is seriously considering the application of minimum wages as allowed for in the Labour Law, and that the intention is to fix the minimum between JD 75 and JD 90 a month.

On the face of it, such a step sounds like a service to labourers by securing better wages and thus advancing the cause of social justice in the current difficult economic circumstances.

The truth however is so different. The good intentions that lie behind raising the minimum wage will not prevent economic laws from taking their natural course. It is feared that the real victims will be the very labourers that this step is meant to help.

The idea of adopting an official and compulsory minimum wage level stems from the assumption that the wage determined at the market is too low. The minimum wage is thus meant to raise the rate above the level that guarantees a balanced market.

In fact the practical application of the minimum wage reduces demand on labour and consequently increases unemployment. Labour behaves in the market like any other commodity or service, and the demand on labour responds negatively with price. Setting a minimum wage may benefit those who are now working

at low wages, but it does not serve those who are not employed and do not draw any wages at all. Even more, a high minimum may cause some low-paid labourers to lose their present jobs, and join the unemployed, because employers have only two options, either to pay higher wages or lay off the subject workers.

On the other hand, if employers cannot pay less than a set minimum wage, it is only logical that they will opt for the stronger worker with longer experience and higher capability. No employer will take a young or weak worker who lacks experience, as long as he pays the same minimum.

The outcome of imposing a minimum wage will obviously be that weak groups, those that need support and assistance, will become the first victims to suffer from such a policy. With the good intention of improving their income, they might end deprived of any income at all.

It is more likely that the minimum wage level will be applicable only for Jordanian workers, and not for non-Jordanian guest workers. The gap between the wages of Jordanians and non-Jordanian workers will thus grow and become an additional incentive for employers to prefer non-Jordanians, using all other

expenses, while the real reason is that Jordanian workers are relatively more costly.

In summary, the adoption of a minimum wage level is a guaranteed prescription for more unemployment. It is a blow to the weakest of the working class. The real improvement in the income of the Jordanian working class can be achieved by controlling the labour market, raising of productivity, protection from unfair competition, and encouraging collective bargaining between the unions and the employers.

Finally one has to point out that the adoption of a wage minimum will be another nightmare to the Ministry of Labour. It has to inspect and enforce the law all over the country, let alone the near impossibility of finding the right minimum wage level for each category of workers classified in hundreds of professions and varying degrees of education, experience, and hardship of the job concerned.

The crucial step taken by the Ministry of Labour last Wednesday to suspend issuing any new work permit for non-Jordanians until further notice is more meaningful and will render the minimum wage move obsolete.

Gorbachev: Master of political manoeuvre

By Peter Conradi
Reuters

MOSCOW — Mikhail Gorbachev has again proved a master at political manoeuvring, emerging triumphant from a Communist plenum at which he persuaded the party to undergo its biggest shakeup since the 1917 revolution.

Sweeping aside criticism from conservative colleagues unhappy at the speed of change, Gorbachev succeeded on Wednesday in pushing through a new platform which paves the way for the eventual creation of a multi-party democracy.

Seeking to harness demands for a radical Eastern European-style change now sweeping his own country, the Kremlin leader has persuaded Soviet Communists that they must be prepared eventually to share power with other political forces.

And, in typical style, Gorbachev did so in a way that will further reinforce his own grip on power, with the platform also beefing up the presidency to give him more clout — on paper at least — than any of his predecessors.

"We remain attached to the choice made in October 1917, to the Socialist idea, but we are getting away from a dogmatic conception of it," Gorbachev told the policy-making Central Committee last Monday, outlining his radical new party platform.

He stressed: "Our ideal is humane, democratic Socialism."

Since becoming Soviet Communist Party chief in March 1985, Gorbachev has proved time and again his mastery of political manoeuvring, coming up stronger each time it appeared opponents of his perestroika reforms were rising against him.

From his first months in office, Gorbachev has made use of the enormous patronage he enjoys as general secretary to fill senior party ranks with men and women sympathetic to his reform programme.

Shortly after taking over, Gorbachev brought supporters on to the ruling politburo and in April last year persuaded 100 old-timers who were out of step with his reform to "resign" from the Central Committee.

He followed in September with a dramatic shake-up at the top, which led to the resignation of five top members of the country's leadership in what was the biggest purge of the ruling politburo since he came to office.

At the same time, the Kremlin leader has taken advantage of the new state power structure centred on the revamped Soviet parliament to further tighten his grip.

Already holding the old ceremonial presidency from October 1988, Gorbachev was the undisputed choice to fill the new-style post of head of state when deputies sat down to elect the country's leader in May 1989.

He stands to further increase this new power under the proposed changes contained in the new party platform once it receives its expected approval by the Soviet parliament.

Under its terms, the presidency — which is now merely the chairmanship of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet — will be turned into a full executive post with even greater powers.

At the same time Gorbachev will almost certainly hold on to his party post, although the platform calls for this to be transformed into a party chairmanship.

However, if anything, the increase in the Soviet leader's per-

sonal power appears to have been matched by a growth both in the scope and complexity of the problems he faces.

Abroad, Gorbachev has gone from triumph to triumph, sparking a dramatic improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations, boosting disarmament and helping find a solution to conflicts in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Nicaragua.

He has also won praise from

the West in recent months for watching in silence as his East European allies took his pledges of "non-interference" at face value and rejected the political and economic system imposed by his predecessors.

Events took a dramatic turn for the worse last month when the army was sent in to bring an end to bloodshed in the turbulent Transcaucasian republic of Azerbaijan. More than 143 people were officially reported to have died.

At the same time, the economy — aggravated by a series of debilitating strikes — has appeared to slip downhill, with already pitiful supplies in the country's shops worsening rather than improving.

Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev was born on March 2, 1931 in the northern Caucasus

to make any impact on the country's mounting economic woes.

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Westerners who have met Gorbachev describe him as a highly intelligent man who displays a charm and ease of manner rare among past Soviet leaders. His wife Raisa also has a self-assurance rarely found among previous Soviet "first ladies."

Kohl takes enormous gamble on rapid German unity

By Tom Heneghan
Reuters

BONN — Chancellor Helmut Kohl is taking the biggest gamble of his political life by rushing towards German unity as fast as possible.

The West German leader, who until recently was preaching patience to East Germans demanding a single state, has decided the threat of collapse across the border is worse than the problems that unity will bring.

He also sees his own re-election in December depends on how he manages the hasty marriage of one of the world's wealthiest and most orderly states with a poorer and increasingly chaotic cousin.

Kohl overrode his fiercely independent central bank, the Bundesbank, on Wednesday and decided to seek immediate monetary union with East Germany. He believes a quick signal like introducing the strong deutschmark into East Germany is more important than the problems that might come later.

It will be a mammoth task if everything goes peacefully.

What nobody wants to think about it what would happen if East Germans, disoriented by the sharp winds of capitalism gusting through their homeland, break out in waves of strikes and violence.

He will be a mammoth task if everything goes peacefully.

In fact, nobody is master of the political process at the moment and the realisation of that fact has frightened both Bonn and East Berlin.

Waigel admitted as much when asked whether monetary union would be enough to stop East Germans flocking here at the rate of a small city every month:

"I don't know... it's a signal, an appeal..." he said.

Kohl's main fear is that East Germany, once the showcase economy of the Communist world, will collapse so badly that it will simply fall, exhausted and anarchic, into Bonn's arms.

Committed by its constitution, Bonn will have to pay enormous sums to prop up the East German economy, help clear up years of shocking pollution of the environment and guarantee social services for the restless population.

Will this lead to inflation, the worst fear of the Germans since their money turned into worthless paper in the 1920s? Higher taxes? Will interest rates shoot up?

Events have moved so fast that nobody knows.

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The stakes on this side of the border are equally high.

After greeting the first refugees from the old Stalinist system with open arms last year, West Germans are now giving a cooler welcome to those coming over.

A materialistic society, they are becoming increasingly worried that unity will hit them where

it hurts — in their wallets.

The comfortable middle class sees taxes rising as Bonn lays on emergency housing, unemployment benefits, training schemes and full pensions for the 2,000 East Germans arriving here each day. About 70,000 have come this year alone.

West Germany's two million unemployed and several other million low-paid workers see the immigrants as an open threat to their hopes for jobs, better pay or better housing.

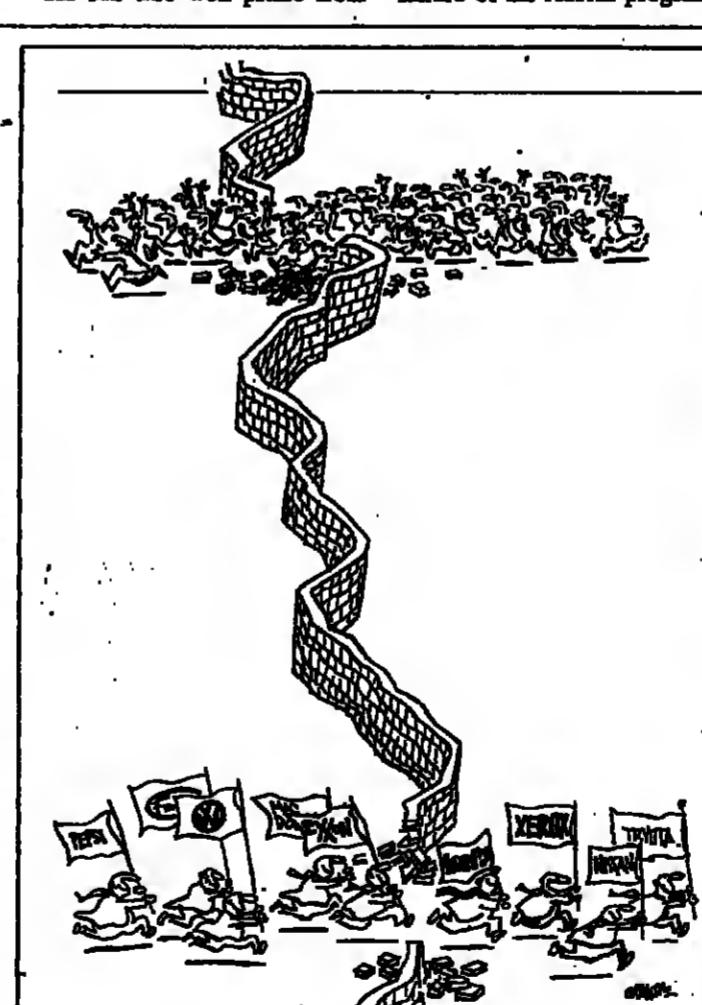
Most new arrivals are well-qualified and hard-working, except for a small but rising number of criminal types — a problem in cities like Hamburg that have attracted many men released in a

prison amnesty last December.

And since the new arrivals are fellow Germans, frustrated West Germans can hardly vent their anger with racist outbursts like the "Turks out" calls heard at neo-Nazi meetings.

Oskar Lafontaine, front-runner to lead the opposition Social Democrats (SPD) against Kohl, showed these fears were a potent campaign issue when he won a landslide re-election in his Saar state in late January.

While Kohl's centre-right coalition is still tipped to win by a small margin in December, any unrest along the way towards the Germans' long-held dream could turn off the electorate the man who raced to realize it.



By FALCONDO in Le Journal (Paris). © 1989, CGW Syndication.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Saturday said that the time has come for the Arabs to realise that they have no future if they remain divided and failing to reach consensus on unity. The paper said that our age is an age of greater political entities which alone can survive in the 1990s and in the coming century; and therefore, it is incumbent on the Arabs to find a way to unite in the face of the looming threat and the inevitable challenge. The paper noted that the Arab countries have not yet realised the looming serious challenges and cannot form a clear image of the future eventualities and that is why they failed so far to develop their stand and adopt a serious unifying stance. The current series of events in Europe, the imminent unification of Germany, the unity of the European Community countries in 1992 and the East-West detente which leads to further consolidation of relations in Europe are all indicators of the future picture which the Arabs ought to study carefully and to act accordingly, the paper added. It said that should the Arabs remain impulsive to such developments they will have only themselves to blame if the greater blocs tended to ignore the Arab Nation's interests in the coming years.

Writing in Al Ra'i Arabic daily, columnist Sabah Abdal Samad calls on the Arab countries in general and Jordan in particular to assign more seats at their universities for the students of the occupied Arab territories. When the Council for Higher Education in Jordan took the decision of assigning three per cent of Jordanian universities' seats for Palestinians, the schools and universities of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were all open and operating normally, but now the situation has changed and the Palestinian students have no universities because they had been closed for years, says the writer. Abdal Samad notes that higher education is the most wanted thing by students; and the Arab countries which are keen on supporting the steadfastness of the Palestinian people should now prove that they really are interested in their future. What is required is an increase in the number of seats for the students in Arab universities especially in Jordan which was the first Arab state to declare its full support for the Palestinian uprising, the writer concludes.

LETTERS

Restless spirits

To the Editor:

IT is commendable to have the strength to find your way in life. It is wonderful to know what you want and it is comforting to choose your own religion by your own will. But it is too much and definitely against any religious creed to display one's belief so ostentatiously and praise oneself on a finally found haven for a tormented soul, even more so when one does it to attack — albeit mildly — a fellow co-believer.

First it was Claire de la Plume whose suggestion that alcohol should be served to those who want it (Jordan Times, Jan. 25-26, 1990) was met with strong opposition leading to praise of services on Royal Jordanian planes and topping it with even greater praise of the pilots' intelligence, which I am not going to contest, but where I, again, didn't see any connection. Now it is Zuleikha Abu Risha, who, somehow — and I believe for all the practical reasons of modern life — wouldn't wear a veil or a long dress. And alongside her all the other women who wouldn't happen to be Mrs. Yaghi's "only models" (Letters to the Editor, Jordan Times, Feb. 8-9, 1990). Wearing scarves and long dresses is not in itself a mark of faith. American women are not the only ones who don't wear them but so are others on a few more continents.

It is a sign of maturity, intelligence, and wit to recognise the "evil" in your society and have the guts to criticise it or distance yourself from it. But to turn against a faith and a people with which you lived and identified for most of your life doesn't inspire much trust. You don't just wash your hands of everything you stood for. Or if you do and it out of conviction as Mrs. Yaghi seems to have done, then you don't have to make a fuss about it. Mrs. Yaghi is supposed to have found a source of peace for her soul and mind. But inner peace seems difficult to find for anybody and all we have here is a battling and defiant (or is it?) spirit that seems so restless.

V. Wahbeh
Amman

Shattered

To the Editor:

I'M shattered! I've just found out that women I've loved and admired the past 25 years are not "good" Muslims because they don't wear the hijab! To think that this "insight" came from a fellow American! Imagine, I might have continued the next 25 years making the same mistake. Now I know — no scarf, no good Thanks Ms. Yaghi for the "enlightenment"!

Karen Abo
Amman

Features

Mental health may play key role in surviving, preventing cancer

By Catherine Arnst
Reuter

LONDON — There is growing evidence that emotional health is as important as medical treatment and lifestyle in determining not only a person's chances of surviving cancer, but of getting the disease in the first place.

Personality, in particular so-called "Type-A" characteristics such as aggression, has long been linked to heart disease. But doctors were more reluctant to associate emotional status with tumour growths, which involve a complicated breakdown of the immune system.

In the last four months, however, two well-received studies have been published that found women with breast cancer lived longer if they underwent group therapy or demonstrated a fighting spirit against the disease.

More controversial were three large-scale studies done in West Germany and Hungary that found personality traits and stressful events were six times more likely to contribute to a

person's likelihood of developing cancer than smoking, cholesterol levels, or any other medical or physical factors.

The studies identified cancer-prone people as those who tend to be over-cooperative, unassertive, over-patient and conflict-avoiding, all attributes which make one vulnerable to stress.

These studies, published over the past 10 years, were designed by Dr. Ronald Grossarth-Maticek, a Yugoslav psychologist now working in Heidelberg, and at first received scant attention in the Western world.

But Grossarth-Maticek gained considerable credibility in recent years from the support of Dr. Hans Eysenck, founder of the University of London's Institute of Psychiatry and a world-renowned psychologist.

Last year the two researchers published a study of 850 randomly chosen people who, on the basis of personality tests, were divided into four groups — those thought to be susceptible to cancer or to heart disease and those

who did not show the factors associated with the two diseases, but differed in other ways.

They divided in the same way another group of more than 1,000 people who suffered from marked stress, and followed up both groups ten years later.

Of the randomly selected sample, 17.4 per cent of the people identified as cancer-prone had died of cancer, compared with no cancer deaths in the latter two groups.

Of the people under stress, 38.4 per cent of the cancer-prone died of cancer, compared with less than two per cent of the groups without heart or cancer-prone personalities.

There were significantly more cancer deaths in the cancer-prone samples than coronary deaths among those characterized as susceptible to heart disease.

"These results have very profound social and medical consequences," Eysenck told a recent London conference on cancer and the mind. "One of our problems is... how to make use of

this knowledge."

Eysenck could not explain why personality plays a part in tumour growth, which is one reason many doctors remain cautious about interpreting the results of the studies.

Some cancer specialists warn that, without more knowledge, such studies could do more harm than good.

"One of the first questions cancer patients tend to ask is 'is this my fault?'" said Dr. Barry Cassileth, director of the cancer control programme at the University of Pennsylvania hospital in the United States.

"I say 'no it isn't,' because what else can I say? I don't think we know nearly enough to say anything else. We don't want to add a burden of guilt on our patients."

"It is terribly important that this evidence is dealt with very scientifically," said one doctor at the London conference.

"If the patient goes away thinking that it's all right to smoke as long as I think straight, well, that

would be terrible," he said.

Cancer specialists are more encouraged by studies showing that therapy and a positive attitude can play a critical role, when coupled with medical treatment, in helping cancer patients fight the disease.

In one study by Eysenck and Grossarth-Maticek, 100 people with cancer-prone personalities were studied, with 56 in therapy and 50 not. After 13 years, 16 of the non-therapy group had died of cancer and 21 had come down with the disease, while only 13 of the therapy group had developed cancer and none had died.

Doctors questioned the methodology of that research and were more impressed by a study published in October by researchers at Stanford University in California.

The Stanford team studied 86 women with terminal breast cancer who were receiving traditional medical treatment. However, 50 of the women also attended support group meetings led by a psychotherapist.

These women lived an average of 36 months after the start of the study while those not in group therapy survived only 18 months. After ten years, only three of the 86 were still alive, and they were all in the therapy group.

Dr. David Spiegel, head of the Stanford research, said: "We were shocked when we saw the magnitude of the effect. We expected no biological effect from the psychotherapy."

The Stanford research was described by Dr. Jimmie Holland, chief psychiatrist of Sloan-Kettering hospital in New York, as "the first scientific study to show a change in survival from psychotherapy that is scientifically sound."

It was followed in December by a study from the Royal Marsden hospital in London that women with breast cancer who responded with a fighting spirit or denial were significantly more likely to be alive and well five, 10 and 15 years later than those patients who adopted fatalistic or hopeless responses.

Slaves of the wealthy

By Martin Wright

LONDON, Britain — A hundred and fifty years after Londoner, William Wilberforce, led a successful campaign to ban the slave trade from British lands, thousands of Third World women are working in conditions of virtual slavery in London, due to an anomaly in British immigration laws.

The pattern is very similar. Their wages are withheld, they are kept under lock and key and sometimes they are beaten and sexually abused," she says. "They are hardly ever allowed out of the house on their own, and are forbidden to make friends with other Filipinos."

Sister Margaret adds that even "good" employers can start mistreating their servants when they realise that they don't have any legal papers.

Instead, they are admitted only on six-month visitor's visas which specify that they are working for a named employer. Once the visa runs out, they have no legal right to remain in the country. In effect, this means that they have no rights under U.K. employment legislation, and it leaves them wide open to exploitation.

"The whole family used to shout at me and sometimes beat me if I made the smallest mistake. Even the children would spit in my face and pull my hair. I had to work until two in the morning,

and then I wasn't even allowed my own room, but had to sleep on the floor outside the bathroom door. I was supposed to receive a regular monthly salary, but most months they gave me nothing at all."

One Filipina who applied for a job as a civil engineer in Kuwait was told on arriving that "I don't employ women as engineers. If you want to stay, you'll have to work as a maid." Already in debt to the recruiting agency, she had little choice but to stay.

The agencies often recruit in rural areas of the Philippines, where families struggling to make a living as smallholders or plantation workers are enthusiastic about the prospect of having a daughter sending money home from a well-paid job abroad. In order to pay the agent's commission, they frequently have to sell one of their buffaloes or a portion of their land.

Among the 200 or so servants who have been helped by CFMW and its campaigning affiliate, Kalayaan, is Maria, a former sales girl from the island of Mindanao in the Philippines.

She was promised a monthly salary of US\$200 working for a Saudi minister in Riyadh. In practice, she rarely received the money. After three years in Saudi Arabia, during which she was routinely beaten and abused by her employer, she was brought to London. After hearing about the CFMW through a friend, she summoned up the courage to leave the house.

But now, like every other former servant who came in on a visitor's visa, Maria is effectively an illegal immigrant. The CFMW tries to find alternative work for women like Maria and Sally.

However, as solicitor Naseem Khan of Paddington Law Centre, which has helped support of the domestic workers, points out, what is really needed is a change in the law which would give all servants proper legal recognition — however they were brought into the U.K.

"These people should be given work permits like anyone else coming to work in Britain," she explains. "These could be valid for periods of, say, one year, after which they'd have to be renewed. But the important thing is that workers wouldn't be tied to one particular employer."

— Panos features.



A reconstruction of the signing of the treaty. Leonard C. Mitchell, 1901-1971.

New Zealand faces growing race problems on 150th birthday

By David Stann
Reuter

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — New Zealanders celebrated the 150th anniversary of their modern nation on Tuesday confronting growing racial problems between whites and Maoris.

Maori chiefs formally ceded sovereignty to Britain in 1840 under the treaty of Waitangi, which guaranteed them ownership of their lands and other prized possessions.

It was intended as a pledge of goodwill between the indigenous Maoris, who now make up 10 per cent of New Zealand's 3.3 million population, and the majority of European descent.

But 150 years later old wounds have reopened. Maori tribes have claimed huge tracts of land they say European settlers took illegally in the last century, fueling resentment among many "Pakehas" as white New Zealanders are called.

Whatiri Mikaele, secretary of the He Taua coalition, said there was nothing to celebrate because the government had never honored the treaty, signed on February 6, 1840.

Explaining that He Taua was Maori for "War Party," she said: "We want to deliver a challenge to the government to stop wasting taxpayers' money on 1990 celebrations and honour the treaty of Waitangi. Then we'll celebrate."

Settlers confiscated much Maori territory in the land wars and later in the 19th century. Maoris now want that land back and have gone to the Waitangi tribunal, which an earlier Labour government set up to judge claims.

Despite the government's efforts to tell the nation that Maoris can claim only state-owned land, unease has grown among some white New Zealanders worried that they could lose their property.

Racial tension has rarely turned into violence and New Zealand's problems remain modest compared with those faced by many other countries. But critics say the government has opened a Pandora's box of claims that could stoke, rather than soothe, tensions.

"As the fishing and land claims poured in, there was a feeling of concern and anger among much of the population in this country,"

Today the treaty lies at the centre of simmering tension be-

tween the races.

Maoris have been hit hard by an economic recession, suffering unemployment well above the national rate. They also face social problems such a high level of Maoris in prison and the poor performance of many Maori children at school.

Maori militancy has grown over land rights. In 1978 activists occupied Bastion Point, a park in Auckland, to demand its return. Police broke up the occupation.

In 1985, the newly elected Labour government changed the law to allow Maori tribes to lodge claims for any land they believe has been taken illegally since 1840.

"What can look menacing under the cover of night can look much less sinister in the light of day. We need to bring the whole issue of race relations into the daylight," Palmer said. "There is misunderstanding of treaty of Waitangi issues with the potential for hostility between races."

Twenty years after the treaty signing at Waitangi in New Zealand's far north, British troops were fighting land wars with Maoris and by 1877 the government had effectively torn it up.

Today the treaty lies at the centre of simmering tension be-

Homosexuals 'acquitted'?

WASHINGTON (AP) — Fewer homosexual American men are developing AIDS than had been projected, a government researcher says, but new cases among intravenous drug users have been progressing as projected.

"Although we don't have good data yet, it's a reasonable guess that they are not being treated as intensively as they should be," Gail said, referring to IV drug users who are infected with the AIDS virus.

The federal Centers for Disease Control, which tracks reported AIDS cases, is reassessing its projections.

The study shows about 36 per cent fewer gay men have de-

veloped AIDS than had been projected by the public health service. At the same time, AIDS cases among intravenous drug users have been progressing as projected.

James M. Tielisch and Dr. Alfred Sommer of the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins Hospital said they cannot explain the difference between the races.

The study defined impairment as vision of 20-40 and legal blindness as vision of 20-200.

The study of 2,918 whites and 2,395 blacks found visual impairment in 2.2 per cent of the whites and 3.94 per cent of the blacks. Of the whites, 43 per cent were legally blind, compared to 1.02 per cent of the blacks.

The survey also found what Tielisch and Sommer called a surprising number of blacks and whites who had vision problems even with the glasses they were wearing when tested.

"The good news is that two-thirds to three-quarters of those were correctable, that is they could move out of the visual impairment category just by the provision of the proper pair of spectacles," he said.

— AP Wirephoto

Vision is racist

BALTIMORE (AP) — Blacks are nearly twice as likely as whites to have vision problems that cannot be corrected with glasses, according to a study of more than 5,300 city residents over age 40, researchers have said.

Although we don't have good data yet, it's a reasonable guess that they are not being treated as intensively as they should be," Gail said, referring to IV drug users who are infected with the AIDS virus.

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— AP Wirephoto

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West German trade surplus tops Japanese

BONN (R) — West Germany announced a record trade surplus for 1989 Friday, putting Europe's dominant economic power ahead of Japan for the first time since the 1970s.

Official data showed West Germany's exports surged last year as demand intensified for its quality engineering goods.

Bonn's trade surplus jumped five per cent to \$34.7 billion marks (\$81 billion) in 1989. Japan's 1989 trade surplus was \$77 billion.

But economists said West Germany may not wear its laurels for long once economic union with East Germany, a goal the Bonn government is rapidly pressing for, is realised.

"We'll see a significant drop in the surpluses because of East Germany," said Ulrich Hombrächer, German economist at Westdeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale in Düsseldorf.

East Germany's citizens, who have suffered for years from consumer goods shortages, will soon start equipping themselves from scratch. They would probably start coming to West Germany to buy consumer goods which are not made here.

That would swell West Germany's imports and curb its foreign surpluses. "Many of the things they want, like electronic goods, are not made here and will be imported," said Hombrächer.

Such imports could slice West Germany's 1990 trade surplus by up to 20 billion marks (\$12 billion), said Warren Oliver, an economist at U.K. brokers Phillips and Drew.

West Germany's 1989 current

Israel Times finds financier

TEL AVIV (R) — A Hamburg-based Jewish financier has conditionally agreed to invest about \$3 million in new Israel English-language newspaper run by former Jerusalem Post staff, newspaper sources said Friday.

They said an Israeli representative of businessman Edouard Seroussi signed a memorandum of understanding last week with former Post employees to launch the new daily called the Israel Times.

Seroussi agreed to cover up to 80 per cent of the start-up cost, projected at about \$6.5 million, on condition that an Israeli publishing house buys a minority stake, they said.

They reported talks with three Hebrew-language newspapers for use of a printing press and administrative services.

Former Post managing editor David Landau will be editor of the Times, which is expected to start publication in April.

Thirty senior editors and reporters last month left the influential Post, Israel's only English-language daily, in a dispute with the publisher appointed by the paper's new Canadian owners, Conrad Black's Hollinger Inc media chain.

The staff accused publisher Yehuda Levy of interfering in editorial operations and wanting

the beginning of a new aggressive export on the part of the U.S.," the statement said.

Macsharry stressed he would take steps to safeguard the Community's interests on the world market but did not say how.

The EC runs a system of so-called export refunds to bridge the gap between high internal EC prices, and lower world prices.

An official said the latest U.S. move was surprising as the market was buoyant at the moment, so Washington should have no need to resort to such tactics.

Washington has made frequent statements deploiring the use of subsidies to help exporters as the world's biggest trading nations jockey for position ahead of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) world trade talks finale in Brussels in December.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Saturday, February 18, 1990
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell	French franc	116.1	117.3
U.S. dollar	69.0	66.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	455.1	459.7
Pound Sterling	117.8	122.0	Dutch guilder	350.3	358.8
Deutschmark	355.3	359.3	Swedish crown	106.1	109.2
Swiss franc	442.0	446.4	Italian lira (for 100)	53.1	53.6

Moscow to cut meat output

MOSCOW (R) — The Soviet Union will cut back meat production because it has run out of grain to feed its cattle, the Communist Party daily Pravda reported Friday.

The newspaper quoted Vladimir Nikitin, chairman of the Commission for Food and Procurement, who made the remarks before the Communist Party's Central Committee Wednesday.

"Today the situation is like this — there is no grain," Nikitin said according to Pravda.

He was responding to complaints by Ukrainian Prime Minister Vitaly Masol, who said there was not enough grain to feed cattle in his republic, the breadbasket of the nation.

It was bad news for Soviet consumers who already face meat rationing in many parts of the country. Food shortages have led to widespread dissatisfaction, recognised by officials as major cause of pessimism about President Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika reforms.

Nikitin said state procurements of grain after the 1989 harvest were lower than planned and Moscow had not succeeded in buying an additional five million tonnes of grain abroad, implying there was no foreign currency to pay for it.

"There is no grain because

there is no money," Nikitin told the committee.

"It remains to me only to take one decision, and that is to reduce deliveries of meat," he noted.

Nikitin's commission, essentially the state agriculture ministry, replaced the old Gosagroproekt agricultural bureaucracy abolished last year.

The Soviet grain harvest was up to 211.1 million tonnes, matching the 1987 harvest, the highest since a record 237 million tonnes in 1978.

But state procurements in 1989 dropped to 59 million tonnes, the lowest since 1984. This grain, which is redistributed by Moscow to the republics, was not enough to go around, the Ukrainian prime minister said.

"Tomorrow the country will be without eggs, because this is a state enterprise, and without meat we will simply have to close because our state deliveries of fodder were reduced by 25 per cent," Masol told the committee, according to Pravda.

Western diplomats said they thought transportation bottlenecks and fuel shortages which plagued the harvesting also depressed state purchase of grain from farmers last year.

But there were reports of fodder shortages before the harvest and the low state procurements

may mean some farmers kept more grain for themselves to feed their cattle.

Soviet grain imports, which must be paid for in hard currency, were 36 million tonnes in 1989, a million tonnes more than in 1988.

Recently the Kremlin has been having trouble meeting payment schedules, although a Soviet official in Washington Thursday said Moscow had resolved its credit problems.

Mikhail Ageyev, vice-president of the Soviet grain trading agency Exportkhleb, said 2.6 million tonnes of grain were waiting to be unloaded in Soviet ports due to transport problems.

And in a remark contrasting sharply with Nikitin's statements, Ageyev said Moscow was in no hurry to buy more.

Soviet meat production last year was 20 million tonnes, up slightly from 19.7 million tonnes in 1988, according to the State Committee for Statistics.

But average consumption of meat was just 67 kilograms per Soviet citizen, including fat, for the entire year.

"People are not interested in concepts, in theories — they need bread, milk, housing, transportation. This is understandable," Alexander Yakovlev, a member of the ruling Politburo, told CBS evening news in Moscow Thursday.

Poland asks for debt freeze

WARSAW (AP) — Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki asked Friday for 17 creditor governments to let Poland immediately suspend payments and then freeze its \$40 billion foreign debt.

Mazowiecki's request precedes a meeting next week of the Paris Club, the international organisation representing most of Poland's foreign government creditors.

The meeting is to coordinate debt relief for the new Solidarity-led government.

Poland has been paying about \$1.5 billion annually to service its foreign debt, the largest in Europe. The payments consume nearly all of Poland's net export earnings, leaving little money to invest in the country's dilapidated industry.

Mazowiecki's request was made in a letter to creditors.

The letter says we are at the moment introducing a very difficult economic reform programme," said government spokesman Zbigniew Augustynowicz.

Levy denied that and said he wanted a balanced newspaper.

The mass circulation daily Yedioth Ahronoth said Seroussi, 60, was raised in Sudan and immigrated to Israel after the founding of the Zionist state in 1948.

He ran a successful textile empire in Africa before shifting to banking and financial operations in Europe in the 1950s.

Seroussi, who shuns publicity, later expanded his business interests to South America and the United States, Yedioth said.

The daily said he financed the political comeback of Ezer Weizman in the 1984 general election campaign. Weizman, now science minister, headed the small Yesh Atid Party that later merged with the dovish Labour Party.

The Jerusalem Post announced Friday it had named N. David Gross as editor to replace Erwin Frankel, whose resignation in December prompted the walkout by the 30 staffers.

The British-born Gross, 66, joined the Post in 1950. He was brought back from retirement to become managing editor amid the turmoil at the Post last month.

The staff accused publisher Yehuda Levy of interfering in editorial operations and wanting

osol would take \$5 billion in payments due in the next two years and stretch them over 10 years.

However, Mazowiecki's letter seeks more fundamental relief.

Most of Poland's debt was accumulated during the 1970s by the communist government under former party leader Edward Gierek.

In the 1970s, Polish authorities borrowed and spent Western money freely on investment projects as well as food and consumer goods, an attempt to win public affection. Later governments acknowledged that much of the money was wasted.

When Poland's economy went into a tailspin in the late 1970s, the country was no longer able to keep up payments.

President Wojciech Jaruzelski last week described Poland's debt as "the greatest impediment to the full start and development of the economy."

Japan, Iran end major project

TOKYO (AP) — Japan and Iran have formally terminated a war-damaged multi-billion-dollar joint petrochemical project in southern Iran, following payments by five Japanese companies, officials said Friday.

The payment, by five companies in the Mitsui group, was to compensate Iran for its spending on the project after Japan stopped funding it in 1981, a Mitsui official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Of the 130 billion yen, Mitsui paid about 78 billion yen (\$538 million) and the remainder was divided among the other companies according to the amount

each invested in the project, the official said.

The five companies are estimating their losses from the venture and will claim insurance from the ministry of international trade and industry (MITI) said another Mitsui official, also speaking on condition of anonymity.

MITI offers insurance for overseas investment by Japanese companies.

The ministry is sending representatives to Iran in April to see the factory and determine the amount of insurance to be paid to the companies, the nationally circulated newspaper Youmuri Shimbun reported Friday. MITI officials declined to comment on the report.

Japan and Iran invested 600 billion (\$4.1 billion) in the 50-50 joint venture.

The two countries, and we feel relieved as major promoters of the project," the two executives said.

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Japan and Iran invested 600 billion (\$4.1 billion) in the 50-50 joint venture.

The two countries, and we feel relieved as major promoters of the project," the two executives said.

The payment, by five companies in the Mitsui group, was to compensate Iran for its spending on the project after Japan stopped funding it in 1981, a Mitsui official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Of the 130 billion yen, Mitsui paid about 78 billion yen (\$538 million) and the remainder was divided among the other companies according to the amount

each invested in the project, the official said.

Sports

Samaranch arrives Wednesday

By Maram Fakhry
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the honorary president of the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC), will Thursday receive President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Juan Antonio Samaranch who will be accompanied by President of the Asian Olympic Committee Sheikh Fahd Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

The JOC has undertaken the necessary arrangements to receive Samaranch who is scheduled to arrive at Queen Alia International Airport Wednesday.

Official talks will begin

Wednesday evening at Al Hussein Youth City where welcome speeches will be delivered and JOC member Dr. Mohammad Hamad will review Jordan's Olympic sporting achievements. JOC Secretary General Abu Nmawar will later present a working paper. A press conference is scheduled to be held at Plaza Hotel Thursday at 06:30 p.m. The guests will leave Jordan Friday.

Juan Samaranch, who held the post of IOC president in 1980, is a Spanish national born in 1920. He served as Spain's ambassador to the Soviet Union and held the post of president of the Spanish Olympic Committee.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH
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KEEP CONTROL BY RETAINING ENTRIES

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♦ K 5 2
♦ Q 7 5
♦ 7 5 3
♦ 6 2

EAST
2 A 9
3 4 3
3 9
4 K Q J 10 7 6 A 9 5

WEST
2 A 9
3 4 3
3 9
4 K Q J 10 7 6 A 9 5

SOUTH
♦ 6 3
♦ Q A K 10 8 2
♦ 10 A K 8 6 2
♦ 3

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♦ 2 ♠ Pass 3 ♦
3 ♦ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♦. Should you draw trumps first or go about setting up your side-suit tricks? If you have a lot of enemy cards to force out, it is usually correct to delay drawing trumps.

West's jump to four hearts, even in the face of partner's strong bidding, was the height of optimism.

After all, South did not open with a demand bid and North held only one sure working card—and no ruffing value.

Declarer ruffed the second round of clubs and cashed the ace-king of diamonds before surrendering a trick in that suit as West discarded the nine of spades. South ruffed the club return and led a spade, taken by West's ace. Another club, presenting a useless ruff-duff, now completed declarer's downfall. Ruffing in hand or high on the table would have been fruitless, so declarer tried the table's seven. East's nine of hearts forced declarer to overruff with the ten, and South tried to split the hearts by cashing the diamond. The end result was down three.

For the contract to succeed, declarer needed to find West with the ace of spades and 3-2 breaks in both red suits. After ruffing the second trick, declarer should have immediately ducked a diamond. Declarer can ruff the club return and must then lead a spade. West can grab the spade and force declarer with another club, but South is in control.

The ace and king of hearts are cashed, and the king of spades serves as an entry to dummy to use the queen of trumps to draw the last enemy trump. Now declarer can return to hand with a diamond and claim the contract when that suit breaks favorably.



Chris Evert

Evert beats Navratilova

MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin (AP)

— Chris Evert, who retired from tournament tennis last fall, won the final three games of the second set Friday night and beat long-time rival and friend Martina Navratilova 6-3, 6-4 in an exhibition match at the Milwaukee arena.

Also advancing to the semifinals were number five seeded Jim Grabb and unseeded Todd Witsken.

"I had a lot of confidence when he would miss a second serve and I got a second to hit," Agassi said.

"I faltered," Annacone, one of the game's premier chip-and-change players, said. "I got off the track. He returns so well so early that you get less time to play. It's difficult to defend against that."

Despite Annacone's 11 aces, Agassi had no trouble breaking serve once in the first set and twice in the second.

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Ligachev: Ruling party to play leading role in Soviet society

NEW YORK (Agencies) — Yegor Ligachev, the leading voice among Soviet Communist Party hard-liners, says the party will continue to play the leading role in Soviet society.

Ligachev, speaking in a television interview with the U.S. network ABC in Moscow said: "Our party does not give up its leading role in society, it does not give up the ruling party."

However, Ligachev, who has been accused of resisting President Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms, denied he was a conservative.

"You shouldn't interpret Ligachev as an all-powerful man, no one man is capable of stopping development in our society," he said. "I know that Ligachev has been called a conservative. I must say I am not a radical, I am not a conservative. I am a realist."

ABC said Ligachev, the Soviet agriculture commission chief, sees himself as a protector of traditional communism who fears the pace of reform could destroy his country.

In the latest move toward reforming Soviet politics, the party

Wednesday agreed at a three-day plenary session of the policy-making Central Committee to surrender its 70-year-old power monopoly.

"I am concerned about leaps and zig-zags," Ligachev said. He added, "If I didn't enjoy the confidence of the party, I would quit."

Gorbachev said Friday he intended to press for more reforms once he has implemented the limits on Communist Party power he pushed through this week.

Gorbachev said he had everything set out to do at a three-day meeting of the Central Committee.

"Once we have solidified this phase, we will move on," Gorbachev told reporters before heading into a meeting Friday with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who was in Moscow for talks on arms reduction

proposals.

The platform approved by the Central Committee opened the possibility of alternative political parties. But officials have revealed little about its changes in Communist economic policy, which will be critical for salvaging the Soviet Union's shaky economy. Gorbachev has said economic difficulties could damage his political reform programme.

A top Gorbachev aide, shedding light on the platform, said Friday it accepted the private ownership of factories.

That policy would reject Marxist doctrine in place since the Soviet Union's creation following the Bolshevik Revolution.

Gorbachev aide Nikolai Petakov also said in the interview with the Soviet News Agency TASS that he personally favours denationalisation of state businesses and the possibility of foreign firms buying stock in Soviet enterprises.

Petakov is an economist "who was subjected to sharp criticism in 1971 for defending market methods of directing the Soviet

economy," according to TASS. He became a Gorbachev aide last month.

He said the economic section of the platform is based on "many forms including cooperative and individual property."

In Marxist terminology, "means of production" are factories and equipment.

Current Soviet economic policy demands state-owned enterprises produce a reasonable "profit" that includes funds re-invested in the firm.

Petakov said that "in between state and private property, there is a whole spectrum of intermediate forms, including cooperative and stock ownership, which should be given the green light."

The recently expressed fear that the partial denationalisation of the economy of the USSR will bring the selling of the country to new capitalists is simply absurd," he said.

Petakov also said that in his opinion, stockholders could be individuals, Soviet businesses and banks, and even, in the future, foreign firms.

Reagan to testify in Poindexter trial

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former President Ronald Reagan will give a videotaped deposition for the trial of a foreign policy adviser in what will be Reagan's first in-depth questioning on the Iran-contra affair since he left office.

Reagan Friday consented to a videotaped deposition in which lawyers for his former aide, John Poindexter, will ask him 154 questions, plus follow-up questions.

The former national security adviser is charged with conspiracy, two counts of obstructing Congress and two counts of making false statements for his role in the biggest scandal of Reagan's eight years as president.

The Iran-contra affair involved

the clandestine sale of U.S. arms to Iran and then the use of profits from those deals to arm the Nicaraguan rebels, known as contras, fighting to topple the Managua government.

The subject areas during the questioning will include Reagan's knowledge of his former aide Oliver North's activities on behalf of the contras and whether Reagan authorised written responses to Congress relating to the Nicaraguan rebels. The charges Poindexter is facing are in connection with those responses to Congress.

Details on the timing and other arrangements for the videotaped testimony will be worked out Monday in a hearing before U.S. District Court Judge Harold

Greene, who will preside at the Poindexter trial, scheduled to start Feb. 20.

Reagan proposed to answer the questions on Feb. 16 in Los Angeles.

Reagan said in a court filing that he recognises the courts have a responsibility to protect Poindexter's rights. But his lawyers also said Reagan retains the right to invoke executive privilege to specific questions during the deposition.

Indicating they expect representatives of President George Bush's administration to be permitted to attend the deposition, Reagan's lawyers said they will "defer to the incumbent president" regarding issues of executive privilege.

The edited videotape would be shown at Poindexter's trial.

Japanese undecided as election enters last lap

TOKYO (R) — Embattled Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu slammed the opposition Socialists' "irresponsible" tax policies Saturday as polls showed almost one Japanese voter in three still has not decided how to vote on Feb. 18.

With the general election campaign entering its final week, Kaifu went on the offensive during a stumping tour of western Japan in hopes of convincing the "undecided" to back his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

For the first time since the LDP's formation in the 1950s, the party faces the possibility that it will lose its majority in the powerful lower house, a replay of the upper house defeat it suffered last July.

Kaifu directed his heaviest fire at the Japan Socialist Party (JSP), the largest opposition group, and its plan to reintroduce indirect taxes abolished last year.

"Even the other opposition parties are against this plan," he told voters in a town near Osaka. "Is it possible that you are going to hand over a heavy responsibility (to a party) that is irresponsible?"

JSP leader Takao Doi's recent proposal to abolish an unpopular three per cent sales tax and reinstate the commodity tax has become a major election issue.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Galileo swings past Venus

PASADENA, California (AP) — The Galileo spaceship swooped past Venus early Saturday, and the cloud-shrouded planet acted as a gravity slingshot to help hurl the craft toward its 1995 rendezvous with Jupiter. Engineers at the U.S. space agency's Jet Propulsion Laboratory received a radio signal confirming that the 2.8-ton spacecraft made its closest approach to Venus at 0559 GMT, cruising 16,158 kilometres above the planet's hellishly hot surface. "We have just flown through our closest approach point to Venus," said Bill O'Neill, science and mission design manager. "The greatest challenge of getting Galileo to Jupiter has been met."

26 dead as bus hits truck in India

NEW DELHI (R) — At least 26 people were killed and nine injured when a bus collided with a truck in north India, Indian news agencies said Saturday. The bus was carrying guests from a wedding when it collided with the truck at Lamana village in Rajasthan state Friday night.

Oil slick moves away from U.S. beach

NEWPORT BEACH, California (R) — Shifting winds drove globules of oil ashore on 16 kilometres of fashionable California beaches Saturday, but experts said the main slick from a tanker spill appeared to be drifting away from shore. Residents of the millionaire playgrounds of Newport Beach and Huntington Beach played tennis and paraded in the sunshine while 400 workers wiped away the oil with absorbent swabs. Asked why she was not worried by the black oil washing up on her beach, a resident said: "I've seen more sunken oil on the beach on a hot summer's day than what I see now." Over 300,000 gallons of oil leaked into the sea from the stricken tanker American Trader, leased by British Petroleum USA, which sprung a leak Wednesday. It was probably holed by its own anchor, the Coast Guard said.

WHO to launch bid to halt AIDS spread in E. Europe

GENEVA (AP) — The World Health Organisation (WHO) is planning a campaign to halt the spread of AIDS in Eastern Europe, where authorities have been reluctant to regard it as a health problem, officials have said.

The Socialists are not fielding enough candidates to stand a chance of winning outright victory, but have said they would seek to rule with other non-Communist parties. With just one week to go, all the signs were that the election would be very close.

The Sankei Shimbun newspaper released a survey Saturday that shows 31.3 per cent of 3,000 voters it polled across Japan would vote for the LDP.

But a combined 33.6 per cent said they would back one of the opposition parties, with 21.9 per cent throwing their support to JSP candidates.

However the poll showed that almost 30 per cent were still undecided on how they will vote — a factor that could swing the election either way.

Another survey Friday also pointed to voter uncertainty. A leading economic daily, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun, reported that 32.4 per cent of some 6,300 voters nationwide said in telephone interviews they had yet to decide which party or candidate to support.

said Romanian authorities had reported 74 full-blown cases, 50 of them children. He added the figures were likely to increase once screening was introduced on a wider scale.

Mann told journalists that another WHO team would travel to Romania next week to initiate a more detailed programme.

He said priorities included improved medical care and sterilisation of needles; counselling for victims and their families; more training for health staff and a national survey to determine the true extent of AIDS.

He said WHO already sent 100,000 screening kits to Romania as initial assistance to authorities.

Mann also pointed out the need for a nationwide education programme to publicise the risks of AIDS, long concealed by the government of former dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

Romania shows the dangers of the silence on AIDS," Mann said.

A private organisation, Doctors of the World, earlier this week said Romania was gripped by the first known epidemic of childhood AIDS, caused by constant re-use of needles and contaminated blood transfusions.

Mann said that by the end of 1989, some 300 AIDS cases had been reported in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Albania was the only country in the region with no registered cases.

By the start of February, he

U.S., 3 Andean nations complete drug summit pact

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States has completed an agreement with three South American countries that commits the United States to broad assistance in countering their economic reliance on drugs, an official has said.

In addition to the \$423-million anti-drug package President George Bush is proposing for Peru, Bolivia and Colombia, the United States will pledge to help track illegal export of U.S.-produced firearms used by drug dealers and to crack down on drug-related chemical exports, officials said.

The four-nation agreement also calls for Bush to press other Western nations to provide economic aid to the three Andean nations, said a South American diplomat familiar with the document.

The statement has been prepared for signature by the presidents of the four countries when they meet at the Feb. 15 drug summit in Cartagena, Colombia.

"We've got agreement," said Michael Skol, deputy assistant secretary of state

for South American affairs, Friday.

He described it as: "a very comprehensive document on the drug issue," significant for its recognition of rights and responsibilities of producer and consumer countries "without finger-pointing."

The U.S. portion of the document conforms to Bush's national drug strategy, he said. The agreement covers interdiction, military cooperation, economic alternatives to the drug trade, and efforts to get other countries' aid in the anti-drug effort.

"There's promise of asking for increased spending," by Congress, but no dollar amounts in the document, he said.

For the second year of his national anti-drug strategy, Bush last month proposed \$423 million for fiscal year 1991 in overall drug-related spending for the Andean countries, including military, law enforcement and economic assistance. Some \$206 million of that sum represents a rise in spending, as part of the five-year \$2.2 billion plan.

Moscow to send MiG-29s to Cuba

MOSCOW (R) — Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze confirmed Saturday that the Soviet Union was shipping MiG-29 fighters to Cuba but denied that Havana posed a threat to the United States or any other country in the region.

"We should promote confidence building in that region and promote normalisation of relations between the United States and Cuba," he added. "This is the main line of approach."

Shevardnadze did not say how many aircraft the Soviet Union had supplied to Cuba. Published reports in the United States, citing U.S. intelligence sources, have said Moscow might be sending up to 36 aircraft.

Shevardnadze said the Soviet Union had supplied MiG-23s to Cuba in the past but these were obsolete and had to be replaced.

to the problem of the MiGs and other contentious issues would come through an overall improvement in relations between Washington and Havana.

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"It is only natural for a sovereign state to want to get new, more sophisticated material," he added.

A joint U.S.-Soviet statement, released later Saturday, supported a call by Central American presidents for an end to all military assistance for "irregular forces" within the region by outside states.

The two sides also undertook to respect the results of "free and fair elections" in Nicaragua.

The statement said the United States and the Soviet Union stressed their backing for a negotiated settlement to the conflict in El Salvador and pledged support for United Nations efforts to secure a ceasefire and renewed negotiations.

Column

U.K. Boy Scouts to admit girls

LONDON (AP) — Britain's Boy Scouts have said they have decided to break their 83-year tradition and admit girls, who sometimes find the activities in the Girl Guides movement a little too tame. The leader of the Guides, who count Queen Elizabeth II as their most famous former member, was less than thrilled at the announcement and said she hoped the Scouts didn't plan to raid her organisation for members. Garth Morrison, chief of Britain's 680,000-member Boy Scout Organisation, said local scout chapters will be able to choose whether to admit girls because some "want nothing to do with girls." No chapters would be forced to go co-ed, he said. "We are aware that in some places there is a pressing need for us and we are anxious to meet that need. It is an important move and a move in the right direction," Morrison said. Nicola Lowes, 14, turned down in October when she and two friends applied to join the Girl Guides in Wark, Northern England, said she would reapply. "I was in the Guides for a little while but I thought it was really boring," she said.

Global weather

(major world cities)

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
AMSTERDAM	—	X	X	X	X	X	X
ATHENS	03	37	13	55	Cloudy	—	—
BAHRAIN	16	61	22	72	Cloudy	—	—
BANGKOK	24	75	54	93	Cloudy	—	—
Buenos Aires	08	45	18	65	Cloudy	—	—
CHICAGO	01	45	09	48	Cloudy	—	—
COPENHAGEN	05	41	22	49	Cloudy	—	—
GENEVA	—	30	11	52	Cloudy	—	—
HONG KONG	16	61	21	70	Cloudy	—	—
ISTANBUL	03	37	19	45	Cloudy	—	—
LONDON	—	45	08	45	Cloudy	—	—
LOS ANGELES	06	46	19	57	Cloudy	—	—
MADRID	06	43	16	51	Cloudy	—	—
MECCA	17	63	22	56	Cloudy	—	—
MON							